

supporter of home ownership and the strong communities that home ownership fosters, I would like to encourage all my colleagues to join with me, Congresswoman ROUKEMA, and all other original cosponsors of H. Con. Res. 7 to ensure that mortgage interest and property tax deductions remain in our tax code.

The beauty of the mortgage interest deduction is multi-faceted. Unlike the reams of forms and documentation required to qualify for many other deductions, the mortgage interest tax deduction is simple, widely understood and used by taxpayers. It benefits hard-working, middle class Americans. Forty-two percent of households that claimed the mortgage interest deduction in 1995 reported incomes below \$50,000, and many of those benefiting from the mortgage interest deduction are minorities and first time home owners.

Taxing the interest on the most significant purchase that most individuals will make in their lives sends the wrong message to potential home buyers. The mortgage interest deduction helps individuals who are willing to make a stake in their communities and take on the responsibility of home ownership. We should encourage home ownership and the commitment to our communities that home ownership represents. H. Con. Res. 7 clearly does so by assuring Americans that Congress will continue to protect the mortgage interest deduction.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL
EMPLOYEE FLEXIBILITY ACT OF
1999

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the Federal Employee Flexibility Act of 1999. This bill will extend to federal employees the same commuting benefits that have been given to private sector employees under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century (TEA-21). This is a very important bill which could have a significant impact in helping the Washington metropolitan region and a great many others with federal employees come into attainment with Environmental Protection Agency air quality standards. For this reason, I am introducing this bill in time for Earth Day. Senators JOHN CHAFEE and DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN also recognize the potential environmental benefits of this bill, and they are reintroducing companion legislation in the Senate today.

Prior to the enactment of TEA-21, the federal tax code contained an anomaly that in practice discouraged employers from using mass transportation or other means other than driving. Previously, employers could provide tax-free up to \$65 per month (\$100 by 2002) in transit benefits in lieu of taxable salary. However, if any employee within a company elected to take the salary instead of the transit benefit, the transit passes for all the other employees would lose their tax-free status. This made employers wary of offering any transit benefits.

Likewise, employers were allowed to offer tax-free parking up to a value of \$170 per em-

ployee in lieu of some other taxable benefit, such as salary. However, if any employee chose to receive the taxable benefit rather than parking privileges, the parking of all employees of the company became taxable. The result was that employers were encouraged to grant all employees tax-free parking and employees were given no choice as to "cashing out" the benefit and commuting by other means such as walking or car pooling.

TEA-21 included language that eliminated this all-or-nothing approach for the private sector. However, federal employees were inadvertently left out of this more flexible approach. Federal compensation law must be modified to specifically authorize federal employees to have the option of receiving transit, parking, or additional salary. The bill that I introduce today provides this specific authorization.

The absence of a specific authorization has had a greater negative impact on the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area than on other cities and regions. As the federal city, Washington, D.C. has a far greater percentage of federal workers than other cities. In addition, the region has the second worst traffic congestion in the United States, behind the Los Angeles area. I believe my bill will go a long way toward relieving some of that unbearable congestion if federal employees who live in Maryland, Virginia, and outlying areas of the District are given incentives to commute into downtown Washington by means other than driving every day.

Since coming to Congress, I have worked hard to ensure that federal agencies and their accompanying jobs remain in the District. Last year, I signed a Federal Facilities Recruitment and Retention Pledge for Washington D.C. and its Inner Suburbs to "actively work to locate Washington Metro area federal facilities within 1/2 mile of a Metrorail station" and to "give preference in federal facility location decisions to sites first within the Nation's Capital . . ." This is a critical goal, and I work hard to carry out this pledge. However, we do not have much trouble getting federal agencies to remain in the District, and indeed have insufficient land for many federal facilities that would prefer to be here. Our greatest unmet challenges are the air quality and the congestion that pose immediate and dangerous threats to the quality of life, the growth, and the economy of this region. This bill is an important step toward moving us in the quest to overcome this challenge. I urge the support of Members as well to eliminate unintentional discrimination in benefits for federal employees when compared to those this body has already granted private sector employees.

TRIBUTE TO JACK POWELL ON HIS
INDUCTION TO THE UPPER PE-
NINSULA LABOR HALL OF FAME

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, since 1993 eleven outstanding labor leaders, individuals who have contributed to organizing, workplace fair-

ness, worker dignity, and the advancement of the labor movement in northern Michigan, have been honored with induction into the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame is housed in the Superior Dome on the campus of Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

I have the honor once again this year to participate in this important and inspiring induction ceremony, which pays tribute to the dedicated efforts of the late Jack Powell of Escanaba on behalf of the labor movement.

Jack Powell had the kind of working career that could be the outline for an adventure novel. He was wildcat oil drilling at 13. Wildcatting, Mr. Speaker, is the risky venture of drilling a well outside a known field. It's a fitting start for life that included pioneering labor efforts in northern Michigan.

After some years as a painter and wallpaper hanger in Chicago, Mr. Powell came to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in the late 1930s, to find work, and he found it in the iron mines. In 1944 he was the first man to be assigned as an International Representative of the United Steelworkers of America on the Marquette Iron Range.

Jack was known as an outstanding leader and a tough negotiator, and he made clear he had joined the labor movement to improve working conditions in the mines. He was active in organizing and negotiating for all USWA locals in the Upper Peninsula, but in the history of the Northern Michigan labor movement, Jack Powell may be best known to many for providing strong leadership and keeping his workers united during the 104 days of the 1946 Iron Mining Strike.

In a long career that ran until his retirement in 1965, Jack was a member of the Michigan AFL executive board, a legislative representative for the United Steelworkers of America, and he was a good friend of August Scholle, better known as Gus, the Michigan AFL president at the time. A self-educated man, Jack was also a close friend of former NMU President Edgar Harden.

Married to Marie Bracco of Ishpeming, Jack had two stepdaughters, one step-granddaughter, and three step-great-grandchildren.

I look forward each year to the opportunity to gather with friends and associates in northern Michigan to praise these men and women, people like Jack Powell, who have dedicated themselves to doing great work as an ordinary, everyday task. I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in praising these remarkable efforts.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND DOC
FRADY

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great man who has set an example for all of us by the way he has lived his life. That man is Reverend Marvin "Doc" Frady, pastor of Clarkdale Baptist Church in the Seventh Congressional District, who, on April 28, 1999, celebrates his 60th birthday.

Thirty years ago, Doc Frady had a successful practice as a chiropractor, which he built up over years of hard work. However, when he was called by God to leave that lucrative practice and enter the ministry, he didn't hesitate for a moment. Since then, he has served as pastor to four different churches, and ministered to many thousands of men, women, and children.

Fortunately for all who live in the community Doc serves, he doesn't let his efforts to help others stop at the church door. He has organized numerous religious events, actively involved himself in public policy issues, and spent more hours in hospital rooms, weddings, and memorial services than most people who do those things for a profession. Throughout it all, he still found time to serve for 10 years on the board of Cumberland Christian Academy, and for nine years as Chaplain to the Cobb County Sheriff's Department.

Doc Frady's life has been a model of public service from which we can all learn. In everything he does, Doc has made helping himself a last priority, and devoted his life to serving God and others. Doc deserves the thanks of a grateful community for all he has done to make Cobb County one of the best places to live in America. Everyone who knows, or who has had their lives touched by Doc Frady's love and commitment, joins in wishing him a very, very happy birthday.

TRIBUTE TO EL CHICANO
NEWSPAPER

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sense of pride that I rise today to pay tribute to El Chicano Newspaper on the occasion of its 30th anniversary.

El Chicano Newspaper, the first Chicano publication to serve the Inland Empire, was first published in 1968 on a monthly basis under the auspices of the University of California, Riverside. In 1969, through dedication and perseverance of local pioneers in the field of journalism, El Chicano Newspaper became independent and locally owned with Marta Macias Brown as its editor and her sister, Gloria Macias Harrison as its publisher, and William B. Harrison as its business manager.

Within six months of independent ownership, the newspaper went from a monthly to a bimonthly, then to a weekly publication, and has made journalism history as the longest-publishing Chicano owned publication in the State of California. El Chicano Newspaper was originally staffed by six volunteers working from their homes. Today, the newspaper has a 4,000 square foot home office located in the San Bernardino Hospitality Lane Business District. Since its launch in 1968, El Chicano Newspaper has grown to become a self-sustaining, minority owned business with a current paid staff of more than 20 using the state of the art computer technology for all its production.

On June 1, 1987, a sister corporation was formed with other minority investors to acquire

two community newspapers serving the cities of Colton and Rialto. This acquisition created the second group of newspapers in the state owned by Hispanic investors. In 1998 the Harrisons further expanded their newspaper holdings to include the Victorville Legal Reporter and the Sun Newspaper group, seven weekly newspapers serving North County San Diego. This expansion makes a total of eleven newspapers owned by the Harrisons who started their newspaper career with El Chicano Newspaper in 1969.

Throughout its 30 years of service to the Inland Empire, El Chicano Newspaper has been a vital link in the Chicano community, serving as a cohesive factor in keeping the community aware of current issues and encouraging a high level of community interest and involvement in local events. Therefore, El Chicano Newspapers has demonstrated its commitment to serving the fastest-growing segment of the population of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating El Chicano Newspaper on its 30 years of service. At home in my district in California, we are proud of the contributions El Chicano Newspaper is making to the community. This publication is representative of the emerging economic force of the Chicano community of California.

BUSINESS WOMEN'S NETWORK
WOW! FACTS LAUNCH

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the Business Women's Network (BWN) and to all of you, the thousands of women committed to fostering leadership, and to men who are champions of the positive change reported in Business Women's WOW! Facts. WOW! Facts is a one-of-a-kind resource database on women in business designed to highlight facts on women—from their access to capital to their access to child care. Below are a few examples of the impressive measurements of women's success found in the Business Women's WOW! Facts (which can be found on the Internet at www.BWNI.com):

Women are starting businesses at twice the rate of men, creating 8.5 million small businesses in this country that generate nearly \$3 trillion in revenue. New companies headed by women stay in business longer than the average U.S. company.

Women make the investment decisions in 32 percent of households where investments are made. Women are a critical part of investment decisionmaking in another 51 percent of households. In saving and investing for their families, women cite the 401(k) as their primary investment vehicle. Women make up of 47 percent of all stock owners.

Ninety-nine percent of women in the U.S. will work for pay at some point in their lives. While in 1960, 30 percent of mothers worked, 70 percent of all mothers are now employed outside of the home.

With estimates that women make up 48 percent of all Internet users, women are the fast-

est growing segment on-line. In fact, by the year 2000 women will make up 50 percent of the total on-line audience and 52 percent by the year 2002.

Women are the fastest growing part of future projections for electronic commerce—one of the hottest trends in the nation and the globe. Edie Fraser of BWN tells me that soon we will have more than 1.2 million women-owned businesses on the Internet for the purpose of electronic commerce.

I want to recognize Working Woman Magazine for their partnership with BWN on many efforts, including a salute to the 500 top Working Women. Thank you to the Small Business Administration, the National Association of Women Business Owners, National Foundation of Women Business Owners and others for generating data which BWN has captured for this project. This is an impressive effort that will connect the world with the growing influence and accomplishments of women.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACT

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the Environmental Justice Act. This legislation would help address the concerns of poor and minority communities throughout our nation who may be disproportionately exposed to incinerators, toxic waste dumps, and other forms of pollution.

As many of you know, back in 1992, then Senator AL GORE and I introduced the first Environmental Justice Act. Even back then, we knew about the dangers of toxics and other forms of pollution. We heard the stories of Love Canal, Cancer Alley and Chicago's Toxic Donut. We knew that poor and minority families, and children in particular, were getting sick. Children were getting cancer. Parents were dying of rare diseases. Something was going on.

The Environmental Justice Act seeks to establish the link between environmental pollution and the communities that were riddled with cancer and other diseases. This legislation also would provide help to these communities. It would restrict the siting of new polluting facilities and provide basic health services to residents.

As I have always said, people have the right to know what is in the air they breathe, the water they drink, the food they eat. We have the right to know if the chemical plant down the street—or that incinerator around the corner—is poisoning our families. Each and every one of us has that right.

And if that chemical plant, or incinerator, or toxic waste dump is killing our neighbors, our children, our communities—then it is time for the killing to stop. Protecting the health and well-being of our families is a matter of justice. It is a fundamental human right—just like freedom of speech—just like freedom of press—just like the right to vote.

The Environmental Justice Act is an important step toward guaranteeing this right. I am